

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A pusher ~~Pusher~~ for scraper chain conveyors, ~~especially~~ of the kind used in underground mining, comprising an upper member and a ~~therewith~~ connectable lower member, said two members being connectable by means of a bolted connection, each member of said pusher featuring one part of one or more chain beds through which a flat jointing plane runs, as well as one part of the recesses provided for the bolts of the bolted connection and located to the outside of the chain bed, the upper member and the lower member embracing each other at least partially, and the upper member being configured as a bow-like bridge element with a bar-like central part and with downwardly projecting cuneiform ends that wrap[[s]] over both ends of the bar-like lower member by the cuneiform ends from above, the two cuneiform ends of the bridge-like upper member ~~being of cuneiform shape and~~ having upper and lower guide surfaces sloping towards each other in V-formation, and the upper member and the lower member engaging each other at each end by means of nose-like centering projections on the upper member or the lower member, said projections engaging complementary recesses in ~~the~~ contact surfaces of the lower member or the upper member, wherein supporting surfaces are provided between the upper member and the lower member in the area between the cuneiform ends at at least one of the bar-like central part of the upper member and the bar-like lower

member, said supporting surfaces effecting a gap between the upper member and the lower member, at least in ~~the~~ a vicinity of the bolted connections.

2. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim 1, wherein the supporting surfaces are formed by ~~protuberances~~ shoulders on at least one of the upper member ~~and/or~~ and the lower member, which ~~protuberances~~ shoulders, at least in the vicinity of the bolted connections, form a preferably slit-like space between the upper member and the lower member.

3. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 2, wherein the ~~protuberances~~ shoulders are provided in the two lateral end portions of the upper member and the lower member.

4. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 2, wherein the preferably slit like space extends over a substantial area between the upper member and the lower member, preferably extending essentially over the entire length of the pusher's jointing plane.

5. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 2, wherein the ~~protuberances~~ shoulders are engineered within the area between the bolted connections provided in both lateral end portions.

6. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim [[1]] 2, wherein the ~~protuberances~~ shoulders are provided in ~~the~~ a vicinity of the ~~centering noses~~ nose-like centering projections.

7. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim [[1]] 2, wherein the ~~protuberances~~ shoulders are formed by knuckle-like centering protuberances which are raised in such manner that on tightening of the bolted connections, the ~~knuckles~~ knuckle-like centering protuberances abut on ~~the~~ a bottom of the complementary recess in ~~the~~ a counterpart and the two chain legs are not clamped.

8. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim 1, wherein an additional centering knuckle that interacts with a complementary recess is provided at ~~the~~ a center of the pusher.

9. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim 1, wherein the engaging surfaces, or contact surfaces, between the ~~centering nose~~ nose-like centering projection and the centering recess are formed by ~~the~~ a frontal nose surface, ~~the~~ two lateral nose surfaces or ~~the~~ surfaces on either side of and bordering on the recess.

10. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim 1, wherein the supporting surfaces forming the space are formed by a depression on ~~the~~ a bottom of the upper member and/or of the lower member.

11. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim 1, wherein the chain link is held by friction and positively within the chain bed, there being in ~~this area, i.e. in the~~ jointing plane[[,]] a small space between the upper and lower members which permits pretensioning of the two members.

12. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ an underside of the lower member is provided in ~~the~~ a vicinity of its ends with recesses that create a space between each end of the lower member and ~~the~~ a base plate of the conveyor.

13. (Currently Amended) The pusher ~~Pusher~~ of claim 12, wherein the recessed surface of the lower member is flush with ~~the~~ a lower surface of the wrap-over ends of the upper member.